

Communique

22 September 2016

The Australian Industry and Skills Committee (AISC) held its tenth meeting on Thursday, 22 September 2016 in Melbourne.

Address by Minister for Vocational Education and Skills

AISC chair, Mr John Pollaers welcomed the Hon Karen Andrews MP, Assistant Minister for Vocational Education and Skills. Ms Andrews noted the importance of the vocational education and training (VET) sector to the productivity and competitiveness of the Australian economy, businesses and the career opportunities of individuals throughout their careers. Minister Andrews outlined her passion for raising the status of VET, delivering strong, measurable outcomes and ensuring quality across the sector for students and employers. Promoting the value of a VET qualification and ensuring the quality of training delivery are critically important if we are to build the confidence of students and employers.

The Minister acknowledged the importance of the review of Industry Reference Committees (IRCs) in getting the right mix of industry representation, given IRCs' leading role in ensuring the VET system delivers industry-ready skills.

The Minister noted the importance of AISC members, as industry leaders, contributing to broader policy issues impacting the VET sector. In this context, the Minister and the

Committee discussed the importance of apprenticeships to the economy and the five alternative delivery pilot projects which are currently underway.

Review of Industry Reference Committees

The Committee acknowledged the critical importance of IRC members having extensive, up-to-date expertise and industry linkages. The Committee evaluated the progress of the pilot reviews to date and agreed to commence reviews for all remaining IRCs immediately, with public consultation, including feedback on proposed structure and nominations, to be detailed on the AISC website over the coming months at www.aisc.net.au/content/IRCs-review.

Mr Pollaers encouraged all stakeholders to take up the opportunity to be involved in the new arrangements, in particular these consultations, to ensure IRCs are broadly representative of their sector and fit for purpose. Interested stakeholders can register to receive updates specific to an industry, or across the full range of sectors, by completing the feedback form on the AISC website at <https://www.aisc.net.au/node/426>.

The Committee endorsed the structure and membership of the Furnishing IRC and the three forestry IRCs: Forest Management and Harvesting, Timber and Wood Processing and Timber Building Solutions effective mid-October 2016. In endorsing these IRCs, the Committee acknowledged the extensive consultation undertaken and the strength of the nominations that had been put forward by industry. Details of these IRCs will be published shortly on the AISC website at <https://www.aisc.net.au/ircs>.

Approval of Business Cases

The Committee considered the first two Business Cases, setting out the case for change for components of the SIR Retail Services Training Package and the CPC08 Construction, Plumbing and Services Training Package.

The Committee agreed to commission the Wholesale, Retail and Personal Services IRC to:

- develop a standalone qualification to address the skills needs of Merchandise Buying, Planning and Production functions (Merchandise Management);
- develop skill sets to address the skills needs for online retailing and ecommerce management (Online Retailing); and

- update the following, existing training package products:
 - Diploma of Visual Merchandising; and
 - 19 Visual Merchandising units of competency.

This work will ensure the skills required across these sectors meet the needs of workers now and in the future. It will also include transitioning of these qualifications and units to the 2012 Standards for Training Packages.

The Committee also agreed to commission the Construction IRC to:

- redesign CPCCPB3027A Install Ceiling Insulation to ensure it more comprehensively covers both the skills and safety requirements of industry;
- ensure that CPCCPB3014A Install Batt Insulation Products reflects the requirements of industry in understanding the variety of products and their uses in meeting changing Standards; and
- ensure the units allow for the effective and safe methods of instalment of insulation.

The AISC also asked that the Case for Endorsement provide specific advice about the appropriate balance of an employer's duty of care for ensuring the safety of employees as compared to what can effectively be managed through improved training. The work will include transitioning these units to the 2012 Standards for Training Packages.

The AISC will meet next in Darwin on 17 November 2016.